

Susan Decatur to Andrew Jackson, March 19, 1830, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

MRS. SUSAN DECATUR TO JACKSON.

Georgetown, March 19, 1830.

My Dear General, I am overwhelm'd with despair at the rejection of my claim! and I do think it a most unjust and cruel persecution! From the first establishment of the Navy to the present day, this is the only case in which a vessel of War has been destroy'd whether in battle or from *ship wreck*, in which the Government has fail'd to make compensation; and yet all admit that it was an achievement which laid the foundation of all your naval glory, and has sav'd millions of dollars to your Treasury! and yet make it the only case in which they have withheld the manifestation of their bounty and gratitude; I am the only individual of my unfortunate class (connected with the Navy) who has not receiv'd a pension; and yet they refuse me the compensation for my husband's services, which in every other instance they have granted without hesitation.¹

¹ Through the recommendation of Jackson in his message of Dec. 8, 1829, a bill was brought into the House voting \$100,000 to the officers and crew of the *Intrepid*, which destroyed the *Philadelphia* in Tripoli Harbor in 1804. The House of Representatives rejected the bill. Niles (*Register*, XXXVIII. 65, 67) thought that the bill would have had a better chance if the amount had been smaller; and he pointed out that only \$50,000 had been given for the capture of the *Guerrière*. He also said that the division seemed unjust. Nearly one third of the entire sum was to have gone to Mrs. Decatur. See also, p. 21n., *ante*.

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I am sorry to be so troublesome to you my Dear General, but you will confer a very great favor upon me if you will have the goodness to call and see me for a few moments. I will be ready to see you on any day and at any hour you may have the goodness to name—my servant will call at your door tomorrow about nine oClock, to save you the trouble of sending so far.

I beg you once more, my Dear General, to accept the assurance of my cordial gratitude for all the trouble and interest you have taken in my concerns, and to believe me always

most sincerely and respectfully yours